



NEWS



News Headlines 08/13-15/2016

- Firefighters at Pilot fire help clean homes covered in pink fire retardant
- Pilot fire 80 percent contained
- Authorities expect full containment Sunday
- Tapestry's inflammatory issue
- Pilot blaze rekindles memories of 2003 Old Fire
- Mapping fire containment easier than achieving it
- Blaze on cusp of full containment Sunday evening
- 9 displaced in Fontana house fire
- Fire damages house in northwestern Fontana
- Firefighters rescue cat from burning home in Phelan
- Arson suspect arrested after allegedly setting San Bernardino grass fire
- Several crashes snarl I-15 traffic Thursday night, Friday morning

Firefighters at Pilot fire help clean homes covered in pink fire retardant

Doug Saunders, The Sun

Posted: August 11, 2016, 10:37 PM



San Bernardino County Fire Capt. Mike Arvizo and firefighter Robert Docis clean homes on Highway 173 that were covered in fire retardant known as Phos-chek during the Pilot Fire. Courtesy Photo

Firefighters battling the Pilot fire were busy at work Wednesday in an added effort to help homeowners who left their homes behind under evacuation orders.

But they weren't dousing flames this time. Instead, they were helping residents whose homes were covered in a pink claylike dust called Phos-chek during the firefighting effort.

Phos-Chek is an aerial and ground applied chemical retardant for control and management of wildland fires, according to the website of its Rancho Cucamonga-based manufacturer, ICL Performance Products LP.

"Our community has come together to support us in many ways," **San Bernardino County Fire** Capt. Mike Arvizo said. "This small gesture is a way for us to give back to them."

In some cases Phos-Chek, if not cleaned off quickly, could stain homes and vehicles.

"We're trying to help homeowners clean the retardant from their homes to minimize any damage," county fire Assistant Chief John Chamberlin said.

Phos-Chek is dropped from fixed-wing aircraft with specially fitted holding tanks designed for the pink fire retardant, according to CalFire's aviation website.

Some of the aircraft in the state's aviation fleet can hold up to 24,000 gallons of the fire retardant.

"When we saw those planes dropping so much of that pink stuff and dark plumes of smoke rising we knew the fire was burning out of control and we prayed our home would be saved," resident Tim McComber said. "Seeing the firefighters cleaning off homes made us respect them that much more. They and the sheriff's department did an amazing job saving homes, property and all of our lives."

<http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160811/firefighters-at-pilot-fire-help-clean-homes-covered-in-pink-fire-retardant>

Pilot fire 80 percent contained

Big Bear Grizzly

Posted: August 12, 2016

Firefighters made significant progress on the Pilot Fire burning near Sliverwood Lake and Hesperia. The past 48 hours have allowed crews to build a line for 80 percent containment of the 8,115-acre blaze.

As of 9 a.m. today, all evacuation orders and advisories for the mountain communities affected by the Pilot Fire will be lifted, according to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

The Pilot Fire began at 12:10 p.m. Aug. 7 in the Pilot Rock Ridge area. It quickly grew from the 30 acres first reported to 1,000 acres by the first night. Hot dry weather and wind, along with steep terrain challenged efforts to gain the upper hand.

Authorities ask that residents returning to the evacuated communities use caution. There are still more than 1,300 personnel assigned to the Pilot Fire. Engines and heavy equipment are in the area and will continue operations.

The Sheriff's Department will provide enhanced patrols in the area. Decreased fire activity, increased containment lines and reduced threat due to firefighting operations led to the evacuation orders being lifted.

Highway 173 remains closed between Grass Valley Road and Rock Camp. All Forest Service roads that have been closed due to the fire are restricted to fire traffic only.

The joint commanders of the fire, Mike Wakoski, Kathleen Opliger, Shane Littlefield, Shannon Dicus, issued a "Welcome Home" message to the residents being allowed to head home. The commanders represent the U.S. Forest Service, **San Bernardino County Fire**, CalFire and the Sheriff's Department.

http://www.bigbeargrizzly.net/news/pilot-fire-percent-contained/article_3683c7d0-60a6-11e6-986f-7f7c1dbe0aa1.html

Authorities expect full containment Sunday

Lighter winds have helped firefighters gain control of 8,151-acre blaze

Monica Solano and Steve Hunt, Victor Valley Daily Press

Posted: August 13, 2016, 7:02 AM



Due to lighter winds and increased humidity, fire crews have made significant progress slowing the Pilot Fire near Silverwood Lake, and officials say they expect full containment Sunday. David Pardo, Press Dispatch

HESPERIA — San Bernardino County Fire officials announced Saturday that the 8,151-acre Pilot Fire is now 96 percent contained, with full containment expected by 6 p.m. Sunday.

The end is now in sight for the massive wildfire, which burned about about 12 square miles and which last week had forced the evacuation of more than 5,300 homes in Hesperia and the mountain communities.

“We’re up to 96 percent containment with all personnel who are currently out there working on the remains of the fire. We’ve had very little fire activity since yesterday and firefighters are on scene mopping up,” said Southern California Incident Management Team 3 spokeswoman Joyce El Kouarti.

“What helped make a difference in getting the fire under control was the weather. We’ve had very light winds that have been consistent over the last few days coming from the southwest.”

The number of personnel battling the blaze, which began last Sunday afternoon near Silverwood Lake, has decreased by almost half, from more than 1,850 to 960. The number of engines involved has been cut from 98 to 37, the number of bulldozers in use dropped from 15 to three, the number of crews on scene dropped from 47 to 30, water tenders went from 15 to seven and all eight air tankers were pulled off the fire Saturday.

On Saturday morning, incident command added a 13th water-dropping helicopter to the fight, but by Saturday night the number of helicopters in use had dropped to 10.

According to Kouarti, the number of fire personnel on scene is expected to continue to decrease over the next few days.

A trip down Arrowhead Lake Road in Hesperia to Highway 173 in Summit Valley revealed just how close the blaze came to Hesperia and how fortunate many residents were that they didn’t lose their homes. Pink fire retardant surrounded several large Hesperia homes on Lake Arrowhead Road south of Hesperia Lake and the mountains behind Mojave Forks Regional Park were blackened.

Driving further south on Highway 173, fire retardant could be seen in copious amounts on both sides of the highway, and on it, protecting more homes on the east and forming a fire line on the west. The beautiful trees and brush that had lined Highway 173 south of Mojave Forks Regional Park had been reduced to acre upon acre of black, scorched earth.

Though only a few fire crews were seen along Highway 173 on Saturday afternoon, there was plenty of evidence remaining of the intense battle firefighters waged to save those homes and stop the blaze from reaching Hesperia's mesa or the Deep Creek section of Apple Valley.

It was at the same time a sobering and awe-inspiring sight. Sobering in the realization that in just a matter of hours a fire that started near Silverwood Lake had literally blazed a trail across the mountains and was headed toward a heavily populated area. Awe-inspiring in the sense that despite the tremendous devastation, not one home or life had been lost.

All evacuation orders for the mountain communities were lifted Friday morning, and officials said threats to homes and other structures in Lake Arrowhead, Deer Lodge Park, Las Flores Ranch and Hesperia are low. Evacuation orders for about 500 homes in Hesperia, east of Santa Fe Avenue and south of Rancho Road, were lifted on Thursday afternoon.

Firefighters will continue exercising protective measures for the many endangered species in the Mojave River Forks Reservoir and Deep Creek areas near Hesperia and Apple Valley this weekend, while also transitioning from fire suppression to suppression repair of hand lines and dozer lines.

“We can expect the fire to be out by tomorrow. However, firefighters will still be in the area cleaning up and hopefully everything will be wrapped up by Tuesday of next week,” Kouarti said.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/article/20160813/NEWS/160819890/0/SEARCH>

Tapestry's inflammatory issue

Housing development would have been subject to Pilot Fire evacuation

Rene Ray De La Cruz, Victor Valley Daily Press

Posted: August 13, 2016, 12:04 PM



Vegetation in Summit Valley along Highway 173 was charred by the Pilot Fire last week. David Pardo, Daily Press

SUMMIT VALLEY — Summit Valley residents dodged a bullet last week as firefighters saved all the homes in the rural community of southeast Hesperia from the Pilot Fire.

But what would have happened if the massive Tapestry housing development had been fully built out when the 8,000-acre blaze broke out? As it was, the Pilot Fire scorched the southeast section of the Tapestry project's footprint.

The fire spread quickly, eventually covering nearly 12 square miles, with a portion of the blaze moving into the southeast portion of Summit Valley near Highway 173, the Grass Valley Village portion of the Tapestry development that will be built in 10 phases.

The day after the Pilot Fire began on Aug. 7, it prompted authorities to call for a mandatory evacuation of residents living east of Santa Fe Avenue and south of Rancho Road in Hesperia. That area that includes the majority of the Tapestry project, which is owned by the Texas-based Terra Verde Group.

The Daily Press reached out to several agencies for feedback on the how a fire might affect some 50,000 to 80,000 residents residing in 16,196 dwelling units once the project is built out in 30 years.

Southern California Incident Management Team 3 spokesman Eric Sherwin of the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** told the Daily Press the Pilot Fire evacuation order would not have been amended based on geographical boundaries or the amount of dwellings.

“We would call for an evacuation order whether it was 100 or 30,000 homes,” said Sherwin. “We establish evacuation boundaries based on the projected path of the fire and the risk to the community in that area.”

Sherwin said vegetation that exists in the Summit Valley area, specifically annual grasses and 6-foot brush around Horse Thief Canyon and the Mojave River Forks area, has the ability to carry fire in a “quick and aggressive manner” as it burns along the fuel bed.

“There are people that chose to live close to nature and that decision comes with additional threats,” Sherwin said. “When you live by the beachside you live with threat of high tides or tsunamis. When you live near the forest, you live with the threat of wildland fires. There are people that live in known flood plains.”

San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department spokeswoman Jodi Miller said the Fire Department determines what areas need to be evacuated, with emergency shelter information given to residents once those shelters have been established.

Miller did not paint a possible scenario with thousands of home built in the Summit Valley, but said once an evacuation notice is given, sheriff’s deputies drive through neighborhoods in marked patrol units as they make the announcement by loudspeaker. The Sheriff’s Department will also inform residents of fire danger using the Telephone Emergency Notification System.

“We utilized social media during the Pilot Fire to advise residents,” Miller said. “Using social media and issuing press releases allows media outlets to broadcast the information during their news report.”

Agent Shanna Miller with Armstrong-Fairway Insurance Agency said despite much of the vegetation burning away from the Pilot Fire, there’s still a “high risk of a fire happening again, which will be difficult to find insurance coverage under \$1,000 per-year without a very high deductible.”

“A question that buyers should be asking is, ‘will there be a fire station added in the Tapestry project?,’ she said. “If Hesperia will be the responding Fire Department, the closest one is over five miles away so that would make it even more difficult to find affordable insurance coverage.”

Terra Verde Group Director of Development John Ohanian said three fire stations, multiple fire hydrants and pressurized water sources will be available as construction progresses.

“The firefighters did a great job battling the fire, but most of their resources were pretty far away,” Ohanian told the Daily Press. “They fought the fire by air, but they also had to bring in water tankers and tenders.”

Ohanian, who visited the area after the fire erupted, said available resources on site may have helped firefighters deal with the fire, including smaller fire eruptions.

“We have a master-planned community that has measures in place that would protect residents and property,” Ohanian said. “The infrastructure of the community would stem the flow of fire.”

In the comment portion of the Tapestry Environmental Impact Report delivered last year, the Sierra Club noted the Tapestry project’s fire protection plan was “inadequate and flawed,” remarking that large portions of the site have burned in the past, with a series of fires occurring over the past several decades.

A Cal Fire map included in the EIR shows the Tapestry project located between “very high” and “high” fire severity zones, with structures in those zones requiring significant fuel modification.

Terra Verde’s response in the EIR said CalFire links to maps have been revised and the city was not able to locate a map that showed the project site located between “very high” and “high” fire severity zones.

The Tapestry response in the EIR said all brush management completed for the project would be conducted in accordance with city regulations and municipal code section, which require fuel management zones around occupied structures.

One resident voiced their concern in the EIR over an exit strategy for Tapestry residents in the event of a fire, saying, “with both routes being located at the north end of the project, what if a fire starts at that end? How is anybody going to get out? There are not any other entrance/exit routes proposed in Phase 1 which is to eventually include 2,100 homes and another school.”

The Tapestry response said the majority of the project site is located outside of areas designated as very high fire hazard severity zones, with these areas located in the southeast and southwest corners of the specific plan area.

Based on the analyst of a “worst case scenario” for wildfire hazards within the specific plan area, the Tapestry’s fire protection plan includes fire suppression and emergency medical service needs, water supplies and additional protection efforts such as access and installed/built-in suppression measures such as structural features and sprinkler systems.

Terra Verde said most fire fuels, such as vegetation, would be removed with development and replaced with approved vegetation. Also, due to the developed nature of the land-uses north of the Project site, it is unlikely that a wildfire impeding access would occur.

Councilman Russ Blewett said Highway 138 and Ranchero Road will be widened, and Rancho Las Flores Highway will be built, by the time Tapestry is completed, which will help with traffic flow through the project. He added that improvements to Santa Fe Avenue, Arrowhead Lake Road, and Highway 173 are also in the works.

“Class 1 roofing and stucco will be on every home and dual-paned windows will make the homes much safer,” Blewett said. “Our firefighters also did a heck of a job jumping on that fire and preventing the fire from reaching homes.”

Councilman Eric Schmidt said every municipality that borders a national park or wildland area has the potential risk of fire, “Just look at Lake Arrowhead, Big Bear and the mountain communities.”

“We have to remember that Tapestry is being developed with county fire, who will be involved in the allotment of fire stations and appropriation for regional structure that will eventually be built,” Schmidt said. “The development will also have a physical barrier and buffer to alleviate the fire’s approach.”

The Hesperia City Council approved the Tapestry project in January after a tidal wave of opposition from residents over the previous year.

The project is currently under litigation by a coalition of public-interest groups, including the Center for Biological Diversity, the San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society and the Sierra Club.

“When I look at Tapestry and think of the chance of fire danger, I think of the words of Franklin D. Roosevelt when he campaigned against Herbert Hoover,” Blewett said. “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/article/20160813/NEWS/160819889/0/SEARCH>

Pilot blaze rekindles memories of 2003 Old Fire

Steve Hunt, Victor Valley Daily Press

Posted Aug. 13, 2016 at 12:16 PM

Last week's Pilot Fire brought back memories of the first month I lived in the High Desert.

My wife and I moved to Hesperia in early October of 2003. About two weeks later, the Old Fire broke out and quickly became one of the worst wildfires I can remember.

I've lived in Southern California for more than five decades. I grew up here and from my childhood home every few years we could see the mountains on fire as one wildfire or another raged in the San Gabriel Mountains, Santa Monica Mountains or San Bernardino Mountains.

When I moved to the Pasadena area as an adult, I got an even closer view of wildfires. And I've been part of the coverage of numerous wildfires at one newspaper or another over the years.

But when we moved to the desert, I never dreamed that wildfires would be something we might have to worry about. Heat, yes. Scorpions, maybe. Wind, for sure.

Well, I've seen exactly one scorpion in the 13 years we've lived here, and it was a tiny one in the fall of 2003. My guess is as the population here has exploded, scorpions' natural habitat has been taken over by man.

The wind has been a little worse here than I expected at times, but overall I can live with it.

But wildfires are another matter. I never dreamed the desert would be vulnerable to wildfires. Boy, was I wrong.

After the Old Fire started on Oct. 25, 2003, it didn't take long for it to head north over the San Bernardino Mountains and into Summit Valley. When we heard residents in Hesperia on the mesa were being evacuated, we started to get worried. Then when the smoke from the fire got thick on Main Street, we started to pack some things and get ready in case we had to leave. We had loaded up the cars and were about to grab our pets to leave when the smoke suddenly seemed to ease up.

So we waited. Firefighters must have gotten a handle on it at that moment, because it never got any worse. We stayed in our new home and evacuation orders never came.

When the Pilot Fire broke out Sunday, I could tell it was bad, but I wasn't quite sure where it was or where it was headed. But as the day went on I could see it was moving toward the Victor Valley. When authorities closed Arrowhead Lake Road at Rancho Road, I knew we might be in for a repeat of 2003.

Thankfully, the smoke never got as bad at my house as it did in 2003. Not even close. We monitored the fire, but really didn't expect to get evacuated. But I'll admit I was a little nervous when I learned deputies were evacuating everyone who lived east of Santa Fe Avenue and south of Rancho Road.

I don't blame the authorities for telling people to evacuate. The last thing you would want to see is hundreds of families sitting in the path of a major wildfire. And that's kind of what the situation was last week. With the wind blowing embers north toward Hesperia, anything could have happened if firefighters hadn't been giving it everything they had to stop the advancing flames.

I've read about the 1979 Hesperia fire burning all the way to Main Street. It's amazing to consider that. Some of the flames even burned property north of Main.

Can you imagine what would have happened last week if the Tapestry housing development had been fully built out already? What if there were 50,000 or more people living in 16,000-plus homes in Summit Valley and on the mesa? All of those homes would have been in the evacuation zone I mentioned. How would 50,000-plus residents have evacuated quickly?

I was opposed to Tapestry for a lot of reasons. I love the beauty of the area and I was concerned that our Valley's water supply wouldn't be able handle an influx of people that large. But as much as I enjoy driving in that area, I don't know if I could ever live there, even if I were on a home on 50 acres. You just know that sooner or later another big wildfire is going to roll through there and burn everything in its path.

There is a risk of fire most everywhere in Southern California, but there are certainly some areas where the risk is higher. That seems to be one of them.

Thank God we have dedicated firefighting professionals here in the desert, the county and the state. They've saved a lot of homes and lives over the years and they certainly saved some more during the Pilot Fire. They all deserve our thanks for a job well done.

<http://www.vvdailypress.com/article/20160813/NEWS/160819888/0/SEARCH>

Mapping fire containment easier than achieving it

Authorities rely on aircraft, GPS for the former, bulldozers and shovels for the latter

Jose Quintero, Victor Valley Daily Press

Posted August 14, 2016 at 12:01 AM



A bulldozer works on a containment line in the San Bernardino Mountains during the Pilot Fire last week. David Pardo, Daily Press

SUMMIT VALLEY — As Southern California Incident Management Team 3 spokesman Eric Sherwin provided the Daily Press with daily updates on the Pilot Fire last week two questions came to mind: What exactly is fire containment and how is it mapped?

Fire containment is a line of bare soil that separates the unburned and burned fuels, according to **San Bernardino County Fire Department** Chief Mark Hartwig, who talked to a Daily Press reporter in Summit Valley as he watched a crew work on a fire containment line last week.

“Firefighters must clear all vegetation, either by hand or with bulldozers,” Hartwig said.

Fire officials reported having 5 percent containment last Monday and then 6 percent on Tuesday. That figure spiked to 64 percent Wednesday morning.

Hartwig said that was an indication of just how tough the Pilot Fire has been to battle.

“The reason we were hovering around 5 and 6 percent containment for so long is because we had a good bulldozer line, but then the fire would skip that fire line and the crews then have to work on creating another line,” Hartwig said.

“We don’t call something contained until we literally can say we have a solid line. Not a scratch line, not a line that we lost three times, but we can assuredly say we now have a solid line to contain the fire in that specific area. The fact we remained at 6 percent containment on Tuesday just shows we lost a lot of fire lines battling this fire.”

Firefighters included the roadway on Highway 173 in Summit Valley as a fire containment line on Monday. That line was holding up until strong afternoon winds pushed the flames over the highway. The blaze then moved from the Summit Valley hills and into the flatlands. But firefighters were able to contain the flames in the area by the end of the night.

Southern California Incident Management Team 3 spokesman Brian Grant pulled out a map of the the Pilot Fire last week that showed the containment and open lines of the Pilot Fire.

“When looking at our containment line mapping, the solid black lines represent a line we feel is going to hold and there will not be additional forward progression,” Grant said. “The red lines obviously indicate open lines where the fire is still burning without containment.”

So how exactly is fire containment mapped?

“Most of the time, it’s easy,” Grant said.

Thanks to modern day technology, fire officials have been able to accurately and efficiently provide information regarding the containment and acreage figures.

Sherwin said aircraft are used to map the fire. Sherwin said the mapping aircraft allow fire officials to generate their maps and release information to the public.

“We have one helicopter that its specific purpose is mapping the fire from the sky,” Sherwin said. “They use infrared cameras to identify heat sources, which allow the operations section to determine where they need to focus their efforts.”

Grant said aircraft mapping provides the most accurate perimeter figures for fires. Other mapping aircraft used are smaller planes that fly at high altitudes, Grant said.

However, heavy smoke columns could skew the information and other methods will be relied on. Or there are times when the aircraft simply aren't available for various reasons, including terrain issues.

“We get boots on the ground the old school way and walk around the perimeter with GPS,” Grant said. “The various people will walk around the line, collect their data, come back and all the data will be compiled together to give us the figures. There are times when the smoke is too heavy for the helicopter to get through, sometimes the steep terrain could keep aircraft from flying the perimeter.”

<http://www.vvdailypress.com/article/20160814/NEWS/160819893/0/SEARCH>

Blaze on cusp of full containment Sunday evening

As of 7 p.m., 96 percent contained

Victor Valley Daily Press

Posted: August 14, 2016, 7:28 AM

HESPERIA — **San Bernardino County Fire** officials said Sunday morning the Pilot Fire remained 96 percent contained. While full containment had been expected by 6 p.m., the blaze's status remained unchanged into the early evening, although it was possible the declaration would come as the night wore on.

An attempt to reach County Fire's on-scene spokesman Sunday was unsuccessful. As of 6:56 p.m., however, the wildfire's containment showed 96 percent, according to the San Bernardino National Forest. A person who answered the phone with the fire's information line confirmed that figure.

With temperatures expected to be 95 to 100 degrees on the fire lines, firefighters were bracing for 15 mph winds throughout the day, with 35 mph gusts on the ridgetops.

Incident command shaved 41 acres off the total amount of land burned, reducing it to 8,110 acres from 8,151 on Saturday. The fire was expected to spread only minimally, if at all. Some interior fuels continue to burn, according to incident command.

There were still 960 personnel involved in the mop-up operation, including 30 crews, 37 engines, three bulldozers, seven water tenders and 10 helicopters.

The end remained in sight for the massive wildfire, which burned about about 12 square miles and which last week had forced the evacuation of more than 5,300 homes in Hesperia and the mountain communities.

“We can expect the fire to be out by (today). However, firefighters will still be in the area cleaning up and hopefully everything will be wrapped up by Tuesday ...,” said Southern California Incident Management Team 3 spokeswoman Joyce El Kouarti.

“We’re up to 96 percent containment with all personnel who are currently out there working on the remains of the fire. We’ve had very little fire activity since (Friday) and firefighters are on scene mopping up. What helped make a difference in getting the fire under control was the weather. We’ve had very light winds that have been consistent over the last few days coming from the southwest.”

The number of personnel battling the blaze, which began last Sunday afternoon near Silverwood Lake, has decreased by almost half, from more than 1,850 to 960. According to El Kouarti, the number of fire personnel on scene is expected to continue to decrease over the next few days.

A trip down Arrowhead Lake Road in Hesperia to Highway 173 in Summit Valley on Saturday afternoon revealed just how close the blaze came to Hesperia and how fortunate many residents were that they didn't lose their homes. Pink fire retardant surrounded several large Hesperia homes on Arrowhead Lake Road south of Hesperia Lake and the mountains behind Mojave Forks Regional Park were blackened.

Driving further south on Highway 173, fire retardant could be seen in copious amounts on both sides of the highway, and on it, protecting more homes on the east and forming a fire line on the west. The beautiful trees and brush that had lined Highway 173 south of Mojave Forks Regional Park had been reduced to acre upon acre of black, scorched earth.

Though only a few fire crews were seen along Highway 173 on Saturday afternoon, there was plenty of evidence remaining of the intense battle firefighters waged to save those homes and stop the blaze from reaching Hesperia's mesa or the Deep Creek section of Apple Valley.

It was at the same time a sobering and awe-inspiring sight. Sobering in the realization that in just a matter of hours a fire that started near Silverwood Lake had literally blazed a trail across the mountains and was headed toward a heavily populated area. Awe-inspiring in the sense that despite the tremendous devastation, not one home or life had been lost.

All evacuation orders for the mountain communities were lifted Friday morning. Evacuation orders for about 500 homes in Hesperia, east of Santa Fe Avenue and south of Rancho Road, were lifted on Thursday afternoon.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20160814/blaze-on-cusp-of-full-containment-sunday-evening>

9 displaced in Fontana house fire

John M. Blodgett, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Posted: August 13, 2016, 5:20 PM

FONTANA >> A fire Saturday afternoon at a Fontana home displaced seven adults and two children, a fire official said.

No one was injured in the fire in the 13000 block of Whipple Street, which was reported at 3:41 p.m., according to **San Bernardino County firefighter** and spokesperson Jeremy Kern.

A department tweet reported heavy smoke was showing from parts of the two-story house when firefighters arrived. They were able to knock it down in 20 minutes, Kern wrote in a text, adding that the American Red Cross was called to assist the nine people displaced.

Three of the adults and the two children live at the home, while four adults were visiting, said American Red Cross spokesperson Tony Briggs.

Rancho Cucamonga Fire Department also responded to the fire, the cause of which is under investigation, Kern wrote.

<http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160813/9-displaced-in-fontana-house-fire>

Fire damages house in northwestern Fontana

Fontana Herald News

Posted: August 14, 2016, 12:36 PM.

A fire damaged a house in northwestern Fontana on the afternoon of Aug. 13, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**.

No persons were injured in the fire, the Fire Department said on Twitter, but nine people were displaced.

The blaze was reported at 3:41 p.m. when heavy smoke began billowing from the residence in the 13000 block of Whipple Street. Fire crews arrived on scene and were able to knock the fire down very quickly.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.

http://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/fire-damages-house-in-northwestern-fontana/article_604aa852-6256-11e6-9a60-abcc884fc99d.html

Firefighters rescue cat from burning home in Phelan

Jose Quintero, Victor Valley Daily Press

Posted: August 11, 2016, 3:24 PM



A cat was rescued by firefighters responding to a structure fire near Sheep Creek and Goss roads in Phelan a little before 8 a.m. on Thursday. The cat was not injured and was found hiding in the home's bathroom behind a toilet. Photo courtesy of San Bernardino County Fire Department

PHELAN — Firefighters rescued a cat found behind a toilet as a kitchen fire burned in a mobile home in Phelan on Thursday morning.

The **San Bernardino County Fire Department** responded to a structure fire near Sheep Creek and Goss roads in Phelan a little before 8 a.m.

When firefighters arrived, they were met with heavy smoke coming from the kitchen and a swamp cooler, according to spokesman Peter McKernan.

The residents were outside and when firefighters made access for their primary search, the feline was saved from and placed safely outside in a box. McKernan said firefighters found the cat in the bathroom, hiding behind the toilet.

Firefighters then started attacking the kitchen fire and extinguished it within minutes, McKernan said.

The cause of fire was under investigation, but McKernan said it appears to have been started by the residents cooking. Flames then spread to the kitchen cabinets.

County Fire responded with two engines and a battalion chief. Cal Fire also responded with an engine. None of the firefighters or residents suffered any injuries, McKernan said.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/article/20160811/NEWS/160819945/0/SEARCH>

Arson suspect arrested after allegedly setting San Bernardino grass fire

John M. Blodgett, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Posted: August 11, 2016, 10:51 PM

SAN BERNARDINO >> The fire marshal found and arrested a man on suspicion of arson Thursday afternoon not long after firefighters fought the vegetation fire he reportedly set, fire officials say.

Fire Marshal Mike Horton arrested Jonathan Lopez, 21, of San Bernardino on suspicion of arson of a structure or forest land, a felony, according to a post to the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** Facebook page.

Firefighters were dispatched 3:40 p.m. Thursday to a vegetation fire at Blair Park adjacent to San Bernardino's Little Mountain, the post states. They found a half-acre of grass already burned and the fire expanding up a slope toward communication towers, and were able to contain the burn to one acre. No one was injured.

As two arson investigators set to work determining the location and cause of the fire, Horton sought witnesses in the park, the post states. He found a group of people who described a man they saw leaving where the fire might have started.

Horton patrolled the area and found a man, later identified as Lopez, matching the witness' description. He questioned Lopez, who allegedly admitted to starting the fire, the post states.

After Horton arrested Lopez San Bernardino Police brought Lopez to the Central Detention Center, where he is being held on \$100,000 bail according to a San Bernardino County sheriff's website.

Lopez is scheduled to appear in San Bernardino Superior Court on Monday, the website indicates.

The Office of the Fire Marshal asks anyone with information about the fire to call 800-468-4408.

<http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160811/arson-suspect-arrested-after-allegedly-setting-san-bernardino-grass-fire>

Several crashes snarl I-15 traffic Thursday night, Friday morning

Jose Quintero, Victor Valley Daily Press

Posted: August 12, 2016, 2:15 PM

VICTORVILLE — Local authorities had their hands full overnight as California Highway Patrol spokesman Matt Hunt said that officers responded to nine traffic collisions in their jurisdiction Thursday night and early Friday morning, including seven on Interstate 15.

“They were all minor traffic collisions, there were just quite a few of them,” Hunt said.

While information on all of the collisions was not available, Hunt said a collision between two vans caused the “more significant damage.”

Officers responded to the crash at approximately 10:50 p.m. Thursday on northbound I-15, north of South Stoddard Wells Road.

Officers learned a 37-year-old man from Corona, was driving a 2015 Ford transit van at an unknown speed in the No. 1 lane when he approached slowed traffic due to construction. For reasons still under investigation, Hunt said the man “failed to observe” the slowing traffic and rear-ended a 2016 Chrysler van.

Eight people suffered injuries in the collision, Hunt said. **San Bernardino County Fire Department** spokesman Peter McKernan said one person was listed as an immediate patient and two were transported by ambulance to Loma Linda University Medical Center. The other five were transported to local hospitals.

The status of all the injured was unknown, McKernan said.

Officers were able to clear the road within an hour, which further added to the traffic, Hunt said.

McKernan said just minutes after that crash was reported, a two-vehicle collision was reported on the southbound I-15. Information was scarce, but McKernan said a 14-year-old girl appeared to suffer a concussion.

McKernan said one person suffered minor injuries in a southbound I-15 crash between Nisqualli and Bear Valley roads at approximately 12:30 a.m. Friday morning. The victim was transported to a local hospital with undisclosed injuries, McKernan said.

Hunt did not have information on the crash, but CHP traffic logs show that a tractor trailer collided with a abandoned sedan in the No. 3 lane. The impact sent the big rig into the center divider, traffic logs show.

All three lanes were closed until the No. 3 lane was reopened just before 1:20 a.m. The remaining lanes were reopened at approximately 6:07 a.m. Southbound traffic was reported to be backed up past Palmdale Road due to the crash.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/article/20160812/NEWS/160819919/0/SEARCH>